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THE PORTUGUESE IN THE TRACK OF COLUMBUS (1493.)

BY

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STORY OF THE EXPEDITION.

II.

“Whoever finds this package and delivers it unopened to the Kings of Castile, will receive the sum of a thousand ducats.”

Despairing of ever bringing his broken vessel through the raging storm and waves, a ship captain rolled a cask overboard, on February 14, 1493, far off from the Azore Islands. It concealed, in waxed cloth, a well fastened package with the above inscription, and this package contained the report of the discovery of great islands in the far west of the ocean.

A second cask with the like contents was fastened on the bowsprit of the ship as a further measure of precaution.*

* With regard to the events that happened between the 14th of February and the 14th of March, as they were drawn up in the following narration, we rely on two main sources of information. First, Columbus's journal of his first voyage, in *Navarrete, Coleccion de Viajes, Tom 1, pag. 1-166*. This text, presenting only a summary of Columbus's original, was made by Las Casas. Second, *Historie del Sig. Fern. Colombo ed. Milano, 1614*, where in Chap. 36, pages 150-153, the son reports his father's adventures during those tempestuous weeks. This text is of peculiar interest because it contains a verbal abstract from Columbus's original journal. The most interesting passage runs: “et di subito feci portarmi un gran

Whither the waves carried that first memorable document of the discovery of a New World, no one knows. But only three weeks later, we see the rescued man, Christopher Columbus, run into the Tagus River with a wreck and cast anchor at the *rastelo*, the Custom-House of the port of Lisbon, (March 4, 1893.)

For weeks the same storm had raged on the coasts of Portugal, and countless wrecks had floated to land. The river was alive with ships that were prevented from running out, and among them, it is related, was King Joam's new-built giant-ship,* which loomed above the others like a floating fortress. Curious boats swarmed around the *Niña*. When she hoisted the Spanish flag, there was no longer any friendly glance of welcome in the eyes of the lookers-on.

Columbus's situation was painful, if not humiliating. Fleeing from the pressure of his creditors and perhaps still more from the ridicule of the learned men, who had condemned his problem laid before the King, he had nearly seven years before gone secretly across the border to find a better hearing from the King of Spain. How he at last succeeded in this, how he was raised to the rank of an Admiral, and was sent out into the Ocean with a fleet of discovery and with what fortunate news he turned back towards home—all this is well known. That fate should now have driven him to ask for help

Barile, et havendo involta la scrittura in una tela incerata, et messala appresso in una torta, o focaccia di cera, posila nel Barile, et ben serrato co' suoi cerchi lo gittai in Mare * * * et feci un altro legaccio simile á quello, e lo accommodai nell' alto della Poppa, accioche, sommergendosi il Naviglio si manesse il Baril sopra le onde in arbitrio della fortuna."

*A description of the Giant-Ship is given in Resende (Garcia de) *Cronica del Rey Dom Joam*, cap. 146.

from the very city in which his whole course of life was known, and where the multitude could point at him as a runaway and a traitor, must have been hard for him, and his feelings were expressed in the earliest official meetings.

On the following day* a boat with armed harbor police came to his ship. The leader summoned Columbus to come down to him and to take a seat in the boat, that he might be registered on shore by the proper authorities. Columbus recognized the voice of the person that spoke to him. It was Bartolomeo Diaz, the discoverer of the southern cape of Africa. Ten years before both of these men had been dreaming of discoveries, and now the dreams of both were fulfilled. But one had been compelled to content himself with the post of watchman in a harbor for his recompense, while the other had been elevated to the rank of Admiral of the oceanic fleet of their Catholic Majesties. Columbus answered Bartolomeo briefly and with pride that, as Admiral of the Kings of Castile, he had no account to render to any foreigner with or without authority. He would leave his ship only when compelled to do so by force of arms. It was then suggested that, as he was not willing to go, he might send the first officer of the ship in his place. But this request also was refused. Columbus's answer was in a like tone of insulted pride. Neither he, nor any of his crew would set foot out of the ship. It was not the habit of the Admirals of Castile to surrender themselves or their men, even at the risk of their blood.

**Navarrete C. de V.*, Tom I., pag. 162 and *Historie d. S. F. C.*, Chap. 40, pag. 163-167.

This allusion to the sailor's feeling of honor did not fail of its effect. If he were so determined, rejoined Bartolomeo, the matter might rest there. But in that case he could not help asking Columbus to give him personally a sight of his royal patent as admiral, to which he had appealed. To this request Columbus acceded. Bartolomeo went on board of the *Niña*, read the document shown to him, declared himself satisfied, and returned to the large custom-ship to report what had taken place. In accordance with ceremonial, the commandant of the port, Alvaro de Acunha, then appeared on Columbus's caravel, and amidst the noise of drums, fifes and trumpets, placed himself in the most polite manner at the disposal of the admiral for all further services.

Columbus escaped in this way a great danger. He had assured himself of the protection of the authorities, who now became the bearers of a letter which he addressed to King Joam. In it he begged the monarch, who was not then sojourning in his capital, but was at his country-seat of Val de Paraiso, for protection as "a shipwrecked guest and an admiral of the Spanish Crown." He further wrote that he did not come from Guinea or any other possession of his Portuguese Majesty; that he had reached the far west of India, and was carrying home a cargo of high value, which he feared was not very secure in his place of anchorage. The people on shore and in the ships were regarding him with suspicious looks. He begged his Majesty to allow him to leave the *rastelo* and to go up the river with his ship to the city, in which his cargo would be less exposed to danger.

This letter of Columbus to King Joam is not in existence. He gives only an abstract of it in his journal. But on the same day, the 4th of March, he dispatched another letter to Castile, addressed to King Ferdinand's ration-master, Don Luis de Santangel, which contained a summary report of his discoveries. This was the same letter * that Columbus had written at sea and had fastened to the bowsprit in a cask, fearing to lose his ship. He now dispatched the original, but not without slipping into its envelope a paper (*anima*) on which stood briefly written that he had encountered heavy weather at sea, but that he was now safe in the harbor of Lisbon. A laconic postscript, indeed, which undoubtedly gave as much thought to King Ferdinand as the important report itself.

On the following days, the 6th and 7th of March, Columbus notes in his journal that almost half Lisbon had come running out to see him, to express their astonishment, their admiration and their congratulations upon his success and wonderful return. Others, however, he writes, gave open vent to their angry feelings that the king had allowed so fair an enterprise to slip from his grasp. The Lucayan captives were particular objects of curiosity and comment.

On the 8th of March, Don Martin de Noronha, a royal chamberlain, made his appearance in the harbor. He was the bearer of an answer in the king's hand-writing, by which Columbus was courteously invited to an audience in Val de Paraiso, and to be his and the nation's

* The identity is proved by the date, which shows the 15th of February, while the postscript (*the anima*) slipped into the envelope, is dated Lisbon, 4th of March, 1493.

guest. The king, moreover, expressed his congratulations upon the admiral's fortunate arrival in his realm and near his person. He hoped that the admiral would not heave anchor before having seen him. At this point a somewhat sour remark as to the sincerity of the king's feelings slips from Columbus's pen. However,—so he continues,—* in consideration of the sworn friendship between the two kings he determined to obey the courteous summons, mainly with the hope of dispersing King Joam's suspicions that he came from his African possessions ; and on the same day he started for the court. They had one night's rest in Sacavem and on the 9th of March, before noon, they reached Val de Paraiso, where a host of nobles came to meet him and lead him into the presence of the king.

We know the two had often met before. Joam, indeed had always been a gracious monarch to Columbus. He had made the poor and wandering Genoese a subject of his kingdom, had given consent to his marriage with the daughter of one of his vassals, had listened to his projects with an ear more willing and attentive than had any of the learned *junta*, never positively rejected his proposals, but always kindly asked him to wait a little, for the time had not yet come. When later and for reasons above quoted, Columbus had absented himself in Spain, Joam had requested him in the kindest manner to return, promising that all should be forgotten, and that the justices should not interfere with him, for that he would stand under the royal protection.† But Columbus had

**Hist. d S. F. C.* pag. 163 : Nel che l'Ammiraglio fù alquanto dubbioso : ma, cōsiderata l'amicitia, che tra lui, et í Re' Catolici era, e la cortesia * * * si contentó di andare á Val di Paradiso. * * *

† This letter is printed in *Navarrete*, *Tom. II.*, page 5, Num. *III.*, in its origi-

not returned, and now, just five years later we see him standing in the presence of his king as the discoverer of the longed-for Indies, but none the less a shipwrecked mariner asking for aid.

His reception on the part of the king was flattering and obliging.* Columbus had taken his cap off on

nal Portuguese text. As far as we know, no English version of it has ever appeared. Thus we give it as follows :

“To Christopher Columbus, Our special friend in Seville. Cristóbal Colon. We, Don John, by the grace of God, King of Portugal and the Algarves ; on this side and on that side of the sea in Africa ; Lord of Guinea, send you full salutation. We have seen the letter which you have written to Us : and for the good will and affection which you therein show that you entertain for Our service We thank you heartily.

And as for your coming hither, be assured, that as well for that which you mention as for other matters in which your skill and intelligence will be essential to Us, We desire it, and with great pleasure see it, because in what regards you such order shall be taken that you may be content. And because you may be under some apprehension of Our Courts by reason of some obligations by which you may be bound, We by this Our letter give you assurance for your coming and stay and return that you are not to be arrested, nor detained, nor accused, nor cited, nor sued, civilly or criminally, for anything of whatsoever nature.

And by these presents We charge all Our magistrates to do this Our will. And so We beg you and recommend that your coming be speedy, and that you feel no embarrassment with regard to it : and We hold it for a pleasure to Us, and shall take it as a service.

Done at Avis the twentieth of March, One Thousand Four Hundred and Eighty-Eight.—

THE KING.”

No statement can be found in the authors as to whether or not Columbus availed himself of so gracious an invitation. It is far more probable that he did not go. At the time when he wrote to King Joam, he was already deeply engaged with the Kings of Castile, as well as with some Grandees, who had favored his scheme and had supported him with money. An engagement of another nature may have prevented him from leaving Cordova. Doña Beatriz Enriquez de Arana was expecting about this time the birth of Fernando and must have prevailed upon Columbus not to leave her, the fear weighing upon her mind that he might remain in Portugal where he had been living in wedlock with the mother of Don Diego, and that the King Joam would induce him to remain there.

*No author gives a more detailed description of the three audiences with King Joam at Val de Paraiso, than Columbus himself. See *Navarrete, Tom. I., page 1-175, Journal of First Voyage*, and dates March, 9th, 10th and 11th—Fernando, in

entering the hall, but the king bade him to cover his head and be seated by him. All stood in watchful expectation of the turn this audience would take. Providence itself, such was the undisguised feeling of those present, had shown its hand by bringing a traitor back and placing him before the tribunal of his temporal judge.

The king asked Columbus to narrate the details and adventures of his voyage. He did as bidden, and with this the audience would have been at an end. Only when rising the king could not refrain from making the remark that although he was willing to oblige the king of Castile in all his desires, he nevertheless was of the opinion that this voyage of the admiral toward the west had been made contrary to the stipulations agreed upon between the kings a few years ago, and that the newly-discovered islands, accordingly, were his possession. Somewhat more than straightforward was Columbus's answer. "I have but obeyed orders to sail. I did not touch Guinea nor the fort of la Mina and I have faithfully carried out my instructions." "It is well," retorted the king, "it is not my habit to treat such matters with a third person." These words were the signal of dismissal.

That night Columbus was the guest of Don Diego

his *Historie*, ut sup. follows his father's text almost *verbatim*. As to the Portuguese writers they confine themselves to speaking of Columbus's undeserved good luck and the indignation aroused by his overbearing remark made to the king. To quote only *De Barros, Decada primeira da Asia, Tom. I., Livro 3, Cap. XI. fol. 56*; (Lisboa, 1628).—"E porque Colon fallava maiores grandezas, e cousas da terra do que nella hauia, e isto com huma soltura de palavras, accusando, e reprehendendo a El Rey em naõ acceptar sua offerta: indignou tanto esta maneira de fallar a alguns fidalgos, que ajuntando este avorrecimento de sua soltura, com a mágoa que viam ter a El Rey de perder aquella empreza, offerecêram-se delles que o queriam matar, y com isto se evitaria ir este homem a Castella."—

de Almeida, the prior of Crato and the king's intimate friend, by whom he was entertained with the utmost courtesy. On Sunday, the 10th of March, after mass, Columbus was again summoned to an audience before Joam. The subject of the conversation on the previous day had been merely confined to the voyage and to the personal adventures connected therewith. This day a discussion was opened. Those assembled took part in it, and they made it hard for Columbus. He was asked questions which, for motives of discretion, should have been suppressed, but which on the other hand he was not able to evade. For instance, doubts were very cunningly expressed to him of his having been in the Indies at all. It was pointed out to him that, starting from Castile, no one could reach the Indies in a voyage of but thirty-three days. No minutes of this interesting audience are extant, but from the general reports on record it is natural to conclude that, in order to satisfy themselves, Columbus's examiners requested him to point out to them his sailing course, to give them some account of the winds and currents he had met with, of the degrees of latitude and longitude in his day's reckoning, and of the size and position of the islands discovered. Undoubtedly his impression must have been that he stood before a set of inquisitors who, under the veil of an excited curiosity, were eagerly bent on snatching from him the secret of his wonderful passage, and of the very location of those islands in the far west. But, on the other hand, there was no reason why he should not satisfy these envious inquisitors. He could endure the pressure ; for, was it not in the name of the King of Castile that he had solemnly taken possession

of the islands, and was he not certain that this possession would be maintained and defended? Nor did he fail to exhibit on this occasion the products brought home from the Indian soil. He showed to the assemblage the pepper that he had gathered in Cuba, the cinnamon bark from the Bahamas, the golden ornaments procured from the Caribs and Lucayans, and, as a final proof that he had indeed been in India, the Lucayan captives were led into the hall. Up to this time the king is said to have indulged in spicing his doubts and questions with the salt of humor and slight sarcasm. His mood changed at the first glance cast upon the Indians. His countenance grew pale and serious. He exclaimed · “No, indeed, these are not my people of the Guinea coast. Their color is black, their hair is woolly. These have the light complexion of the people of India, as I have been told. Only look, how straight is their hair!”

It may have been at this moment that, as we are told, the imprudent remark escaped the lips of Columbus : “Indeed, had your Majesty only shown me more confidence and lent an ear to my proposals some years ago, the King of Portugal would now be the ruler of India.” These words aroused a storm of indignation in the assemblage that found echo in the whole nation.

When the audience was ended, some cavaliers of the Court approached the king with a proposal to remove the foul slanderer at once, in one way or another, on his return to the harbor. The great secret, they said, ought to be buried with the man himself. The plot met, however, with the most serious disapproval of the king.

There then followed a third and last audience, with which Columbus took his farewell of the king. He could not, however, refuse to accept an invitation on the part of the queen Leonor, who had expressed her wish to meet him in the Convent of San Antonio. There Columbus saw her in company with her brother Emanuel* and the Marquis Don Jorge, both belonging to the household of the queen. So it seems that not without wise forethought, care was taken that every prominent personage of the kingdom was given a chance to hear from the lips of the remarkable adventurer himself the story of his expedition. Witnesses and testimony were to be gathered, and the perfidious infraction of the treaties laid before the Cortes, in whose hands the decision as to the final measures rested.

The cavalier Don Martin de Noronha was Columbus's inseparable companion on the way back to the harbor. When they arrived at the *rastelo*, they were overtaken by another cavalier to offer Columbus saddle-horses for his return to Castile. Of course Columbus declined the courteous offer and shut his eyes when one hundred ducats, as a present from the king, were slipped into the hand of the first mate of the Niña.

One of the admiral's last acts in Lisbon was to despatch a letter to Don Rafael de Sanchez,† who was

* Columbus (Journal, March ii,) speaks only of the "*duque y el marqués*." If we consult *H. Schaefer, Gesch. v. Portugall (in Gesch. d. Europ. St., Heeren und Ukert) Vol. II., pag. 655, sqq.* it will become evident that by the first was meant Don Emanuel, the Duque de Braganza e Conde de Beja, the only survivor of the four brothers of Queen Leonor, and by the other, King Joam's illegitimate son, Don Jorge, as he was called by the people, both having been attached by the king to the queen's household.

† This letter is printed in *Navarrete, Tom. I., pag. 178-197*, with a version in Latin, the translator being Leandro Cosco, Roma, 1493. In this Latin shape, as

the ration-master of the Kings of Castile. This letter is dated 13th of March, 1493, but no mention is made in it of the stay in Lisbon, nor of the audiences with the King of Portugal. It is a mere copy of that previously sent to Don Luis de Santangel. Columbus soon after weighed anchor, and we do not hear of him prior to the date of March 31, when, amid the enthusiastic cheers of the whole populace, he made his entrance into Seville. Thence he hastened to Barcelona, where King Ferdinand was holding his Court.

The first great affair of state planned in this city was to obtain the papal confirmation of the possession of the new islands, and a permit for further discoveries to be made in the same direction. How quickly Ferdinand's messengers accomplished their journey is shown by the date of the Bull, Rome, the 4th of May.

Meanwhile, those in Lisbon were not inactive, for immediately after Columbus left the Tagus River, the deeply-mortified king summoned his Cortes to assemble

is known, the letter made the round of Europe and conveyed to the learned world for the first time the knowledge of the discoveries in the West. The Spanish text, taken sentence by sentence, is in substance identical with Columbus's letter addressed from Lisbon on the 4th of March, to Luis de Santangel. In wording, however, this Sanchez-letter differs materially from the one to Santangel, in which we have the words as they were put down originally by the discoverer, while the Sanchez-letter must be regarded as a paraphrase. It is couched in such an elegant Castilian as Columbus never was able to write. Containing, as the letter does, news so important and so closely connected with the glory of the king and the nation, it was well thought of in the publisher to present the document in a finished and attractive style. Upon comparing the two texts it will be found that the Sanchez-letter mentions two islands more than those named in the Santangel-letter, *i. e.*, *Matinino* and *Caris*. In this the paraphrase appears to be more correct than the original, in which either the copyist or the printer read "*matrimonio*" instead of *Matinino*, and omitted the "*Island of Caris*," from the place in which Columbus must have mentioned the name when speaking of the habits of the Lucayan Caribs. On the other hand, the reader is surprised to find the *legua* computed at three *millas*, four of these being generally reckoned as equivalent to one *legua*.

in Torres Vedras. Vengeance was to be taken and war to be declared. There must have been many doubts and varying opinions as to how the purpose could be accomplished, and whether Portugal could make head against the powerful monarch beyond the Guadiana. Yet, even then there was a fleet lying at anchor in the Island of Madeira ready to start for an expedition along the African coast. Nothing, therefore, was easier than to acquaint the commander, Don Francisco de Almeida,* with the suggestions and facts so deftly gathered from the Castilian admiral, to send ships in the track of his course, and, if necessary, to fight out the duel at sea for the possession of India. This was the verdict of the people, for they felt and knew that they were masters on the water. Yet there was still another party. They wished to wage the war on land. They longed to have the throne of Castile occupied by Juana, the legitimate successor to her father, the King Henrique of Castile, since it was by mere trickery that she had been superseded by her cousin Isabel, the consort of Ferdinand. The unfortunate lady had found refuge in Portugal, and it was rumored that King Joam, on the road to Torres Vedras, had stopped at her residence and had had a long interview with her. It was further ru-

* This is the name of the presumed commander of the expedition, as it is given by the Portuguese historians. It is confirmed by the author of the *Annaes da Marinha Portuguesa*, Sr. Dom Ignacio da Costa Quintella, Lisboa, 1839, where, in the chapter of Reinado del Rei Don Manuel, and on page 222, he says: "Em consequencia deste parecer mandou armar huma Esquadra, de que nomeu Comandante en Chefe a Don Francisco de Almeida, filho do Conde de Abrantes." On comparing *Barros*, Tom. ii., Dec. 2, libro 3, cap. x, fol. 77 and 78, it will be found that the famous conqueror of the Indies and the commander of the West Indian caravels must have been one and the same person: "Foi dō Francisco d'Almeida filho septimo de dō Lopo d'Almeida, primeiro Conde de Abrantes (fol. 77), and "foi dō Diogo d'Almeida, Prior do Crato, seu irmam" (fol. 78).

mored that the king's intention was to draw the princess from the obscurity in which she lived, to bring her before the public eye, and set ablaze again the old war of succession.*

The Cortes assembled in Torres Vedras resolved, however, to follow the great current of national feeling. Upon presentation of the matter the king said that he did not care at all for his relationship to the kings of Castile. It was not a personal affair of his, but that of his vassals, and the whole nation whose honor he had sworn to protect, and who for long years had always considered themselves to be the born rulers of the ocean. By the Bull of 1438 Pope Eugene had settled the boundaries of Castile's dominion in the ocean. In conformity with this no Spanish vessel was allowed to pass the line of the Canaries to the south, and distinct pledges had been given to him on this subject by King Ferdinand before the sailing of Columbus's expedition. Hence, as the Castilian admiral had evidently sailed beyond the boundary line, and as he had found new islands there, these new islands, so he considered, belonged to him and to his people. He was resolved to stand by his right and fight for it.†

The deliberations of the Cortes resulted in a proclamation to the effect that steps had been taken to settle

* On the adventures of this unfortunate princess read *Schaefer, Gesch. v. Port. Vol. II., pag. 580-83*. Special mention of this circumstance is made by a well-informed Portuguese historian, *Damião Antonio de Lemos, Faria y Castro, Hist. geral de Portugal, 20 vols., Lisboa, 1787*. In vol. 8, page 212, he says: "Visita en el camino a Da Joanna, presumtiva herdeira de Hespanha. Esta marcha repentina e visita não esperada fizéram nascer o rumor, de que El-Rei determinava inquietar os de Castella, e tirar D. Joanna ao theatro para pretextar o rompimento." * * *

† De Lemos (as above), page 212 * * * glória, que elle entendia reservada só para os seus vasallos, tão conhecidos entam por unicos dominantes dos mares.

the affair in a peremptory way with the King of Castile. On the sixth of April, a royal messenger, in the person of Don Ruy de Saude, was dispatched to make Ferdinand acquainted with the temper and feeling of his aggrieved neighbor. This mission of Saude, to quote the words of our authority,* was meant only to withdraw attention from Joam's bellicose proclamation and the expedition he had sent out in the track of Columbus's western discoveries. We learn from the same source† that in the letter written by Joam he expressed to Ferdinand the joy he felt at the news of Columbus's success, and his satisfaction that the admiral had kept the line of the Canaries and had not gone to the South: "Now, as his royal brother undoubtedly has the intention to follow up his new discoveries, he had resolved to beseech him, most urgently, to order the Castilian admiral to keep the lines of the Canaries. For if he (Joam) on his part, should also resolve to send ships of discovery, he would give orders to his captains, under the most severe penalty, not to cross the line to the north. It was only under such conditions that the right and the property of both would be preserved."

It can hardly be imagined that King Joam could have asserted his rights with more firmness and at the same time have declared his understood intentions more art-

*See Geronimo Çurita, *Anales de Aragon, Hist. d. Rey Don Hernando el Catolico, Çaragoça, 1670, Tom. 5, pag. 30 sqq.*—"porque con este color dissimuló lo de la empresa, que se publicó que queria seguir en el mismo descubrimiento de Colon."

†Çurita, as above.—One cannot read Çurita on this subject without gaining the conviction that he had access to the whole of the official correspondence exchanged between the two kings, and now no longer within reach. Although he is not so positive and explicit about the dispatch of Portuguese ships on the track of Columbus as we shall see that King Ferdinand was, he takes the whole affair for granted, and so do de Barros and the rest of the Portuguese chroniclers.

fully than in the words quoted. His heart must have burned with anger to see his ocean-kingdom invaded by his powerful neighbor. He expresses himself however as if Fernando were rather welcome to continue the discoveries. He does not directly threaten to seize Ferdinand's ships should they be found south of the dividing line. He puts it indirectly, that he would pitilessly punish his own captains should they be found north of the line in Ferdinand's waters. Joam was thoroughly convinced of the trespass of Columbus, but he does not in any way refer to it, when speaking of him. On the contrary he only praises his accuracy and congratulates Ferdinand upon having so capable a subject.

Notwithstanding the speed with which Saude travelled, rumors preceded him to Castile of naval preparations made in Portugal with the object of seizing the islands. King Ferdinand, alarmed by these rumors, hastened to send to Lisbon, even before Saude's appearance at the Court, one of his most trusted councillors, Don Lope de Herrera. Herrera was the bearer of two royal missives. One of these was to be handed to Joam, if the envoy on his arrival was convinced that no warlike preparations were going on in Portugal and that no ships had been sent out to the West. The same missive also contained Ferdinand's thanks for the good reception which Joam had given to Columbus, and an entreaty to avoid the difficulties certain to arise if ships had been sent to take possession of his new territories. Since he and his predecessors had always taken the greatest care to respect Portugal's discoveries along the coast of Africa, he might fairly expect the same consideration from Joam in the present instance. The other missive Herrera

was bound to present should he observe that Portugal was bent on war. This second letter contained a curt summons to stop preparations; failing which, it would be left to war to decide between the two kingdoms.*

It seems that Herrera on reaching Lisbon did not get the impression that Portugal was busy with preparations for war. As for the fleet, which was stationed, not at Lisbon but at Madeira, little could be learned, for the admiralty kept its own counsel with regards to its plans and the destination of the ships.†

Rumors as to the dispatch of vessels had been afloat before and must have reached Herrera when at Lisbon, but he was not able to get at the facts, which gave rise to the rumors. It is therefore probable that he resolved to present the first of the missives, and of this story corroboration will be found in a letter written by King Ferdinand to Columbus, who then resided in Cordova.‡ This letter expresses confidence in the preservation of

**Curita*, as above: * * * "que si el Rey de Portugal hubiese embiado o quisiese embiar à las islas, no se le diese *esta carta*—sino solo *una de creencia*, para requirirle con mas aspereza—y que lo mandase pregonar en su reino."

†It had been for years the policy of the Crown of Portugal to spread a thick veil over all its Oceanic expeditions. In order to keep these out of sight of foreign spies, the Royal Naval Station had been removed to the port of the Island of Madeira. The assembling of the fleet and its waiting for orders to sail, just at this time, is attested unanimously by all contemporary writers. Compare on this subject *Dr Heinrich Schaefer's* master work, *Geschichte von Portugal, in Geschichte der Europ. Staaten von Heeren und Ukert, Hamburg, 1836—1854*, 5 volumes, and especially *Vol. iii.*, page 67, *sqq.*

‡*Col. de Documentos inéditos, Madrid, 1878, Tom. 30, pag. 171.* El Rey e la Reyna á Don Christóbal Colon, Barcelona, Xunio 12, 1493. * * * Agora vino á nos Herrera, nuestro mensaxero, el que abiamos ymbiado al Rey de *Portugal* sobre las carabelas que nos descian que ymbiaba a las dichas yslas e Tierras Nuestras descubiertas e por descubrir * * * e para que se declare esto, disce que imbiara a nos, sus mensaxeros, los cuales aun no son venidos, e fasta que vengan, disce que no ha ymbiado nin ymbiará navios algvnos.

peace. It says: "Herrera has just arrived here. You know we sent him to the King of Portugal on account of those caravels, rumors of the dispatch of which to the islands of your discovery had come to our ears. The answer we have received is well-worded and gives us satisfaction. It seems that the king's intentions are in full conformity with ours, which are that each of us shall keep that which belongs to him. And in order to come to an understanding, he says that he will send to us ambassadors, who have not yet arrived, and he also says that before their arrival he has not sent, nor will he send, ships to the West. You shall learn of all this in time. As to your departure, make haste and observe economy; notify us also of all you hear from Portugal." . . .

Columbus's sailing had been fixed for the 15th of August. The preparations had been made on the grandest scale. Not only were the new islands to be peopled with colonists, and the latter to be furnished with provisions until a crop had made them self-supporting, but care was also taken to protect them as well as the vessels against any attack at the hands of the Portuguese.

The whole month of July passed and neither King Joam's messengers nor the Pope's promised Bull had arrived in Castile. It was not till the first week of August that the papal confirmation came to the hands of King Ferdinand.* We translate the words with which he sends a copy of this Bull to Columbus. "Barcelona, August 4, 1493. The Bull concerning the islands and countries which you discovered and are to

* *Doc. Inéditos, Tom. 30, pag. 194.*

explore still further, has just arrived here. We send you an authorized copy and translation of it to be promulgated there so that everybody may become acquainted with it as well as with my will, that no one without my special permission is allowed to go thither. Take this copy with you on board. For, should you be compelled to enter any port of any country, you may show it to attest your authority. We are still in expectation of King Joam's messengers. . . . Do not forget to send us the promised sailing chart."

Columbus's ships were not ready to sail by the 15th of August. It was not before the 27th of September that he was able to weigh anchor. In these six weeks of delay various events occurred which, in our judgment, cast a flood of light upon the problem of our chart, and we call attention to some interesting points of the correspondence between Ferdinand and Columbus. The king writes from Barcelona, 18th of August, 1493: * "As to what was written to you about the King of Portugal concerning his dispatching a caravel from the island of Madeira, and as to your offer to give chase, you have my full consent to do so; but you will take care not to allow the ships you intend to select for such a purpose to touch at Guinea or the port of La Mina, for they are in the domain of Portugal. . . The embassy has now arrived here, but has not yet been presented to me. I trust that they will approach us in the spirit of justice and reason, for this is all we ask and wish. Should the King of Portugal, however, have prepared a fleet to sail on your course, do not be troubled. All this will be settled, and well settled, with

**Doc. Incéditos, Tom. 30, pag. 202.*

the help of God. Therefore, do not tarry, but leave as soon as possible. Do not keep too near the coast of Portugal, else they will see you and sail after you."

This letter is followed by another: "Barcelona, 5th of September, 1493.* "You will remember our letter, in which we told you that the King of Portugal sent messengers to us to confer on the subject reported to him through Lope de Herrera, which was that we would not allow anybody to sail to those parts which are ours. We had a long conference with those gentlemen on this affair, and it almost seems as if no agreement can be reached. They now know plainly what we want, and tell us that they wish to be furnished with new instructions from their sovereign. . . Make haste and sail as soon as possible. . . Avoid the Cape of St Vincent and the whole coast of Portugal. They must not learn your course. . . And now, as to what you wrote us some months ago about the news you had from Portugal, that a caravel had left Madeira to go to the islands and to parts whither the Portuguese never had gone before, *the messengers pretend that he who sailed in that caravel did so without the orders of the King of Portugal, and that the king sent three caravels after him to seize him.* Now,

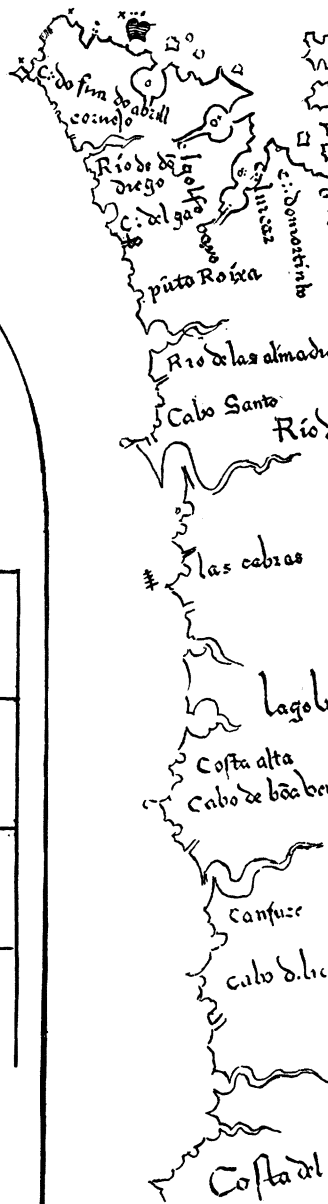
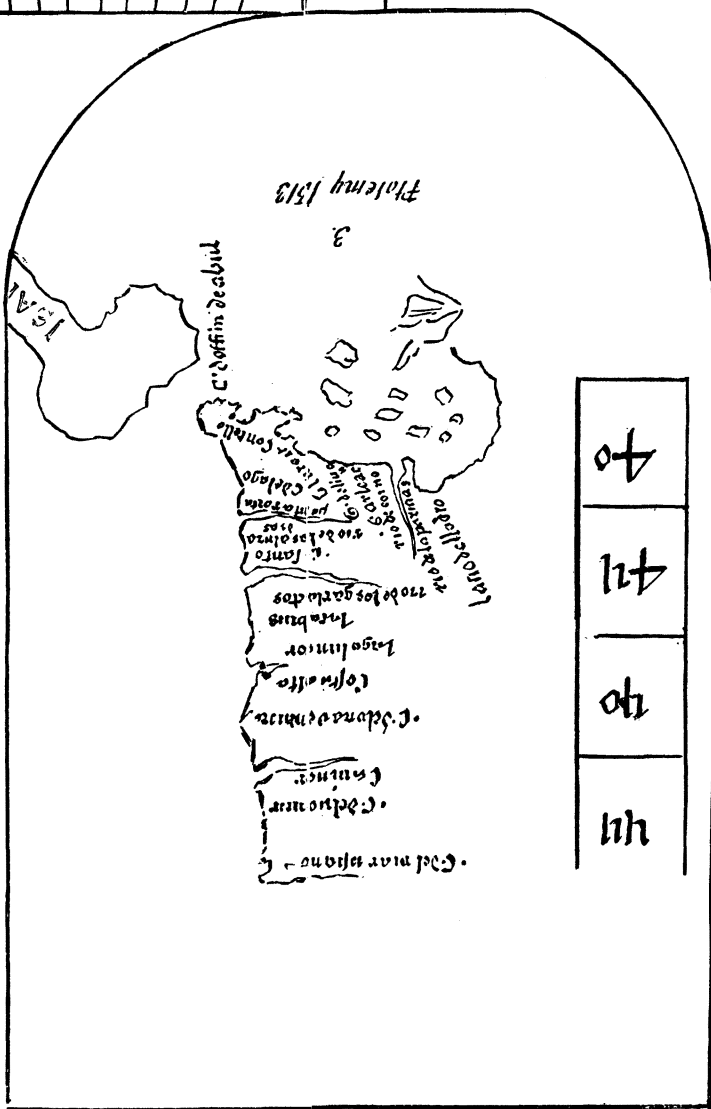
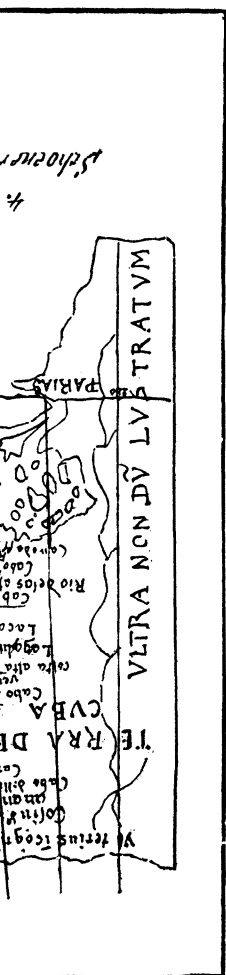
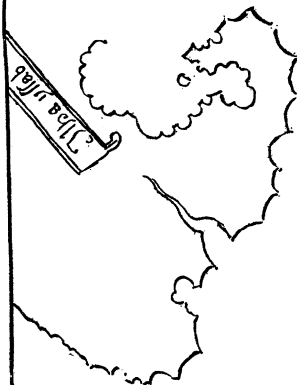
**Doc. Inéditos. Tom. 30, pag. 211, 212 and 213 . . .* "los quales (mensajeros) vinieron aquí, e con ellos se ha mucho platicado en el negocio, e creemos que no se podrá concertar, porque ellos vienen informados de lo que Nos. e creemos que quieren consultar con el Rey de Portugal. * * * E porque ya sabeis que nos escribisteis que abíades sabido que de la isla de Madera era partida *una carabela* a descubrir ysla o tierra a otras partes que non an ydo los Portugueses fasta aquí, y estos mensajeros del Rey Nos dicen que aquel que fué en la carabela lo fizo sin mandamiento del Rey de Portugal, e *quel Rey abia ymbiado en pos dél otras tres carabelas para lo tomar, e podría ser questo se ficiese con otro respecto, o que los mis mos que fueron en las carabelas, unas o otras querrian descubrir algo en lo que pertenescie d Nos. por ende nos mandamos.* * * *

what other object can this have had than that the three should join the first, and all the four together sail in search of those parts and islands which belongs to us? Therefore, we order you to attend to to this affair, and with much zeal, and to provide that neither these nor any other caravels that may be further sent out with like intentions, shall be found making discoveries within the reach of our boundaries, and which are best known to you. For, although we do not despair of there still being a chance to come to an agreement with the King of Portugal, it is but reasonable, and we shall insist on it, that those who have dared to enter our possessions shall be severely punished, and ships and crews be seized. Moreover, the same messengers express to us the belief that there might be islands and mainland lying between the Cape of Africa and that line which you wanted to have drawn in the Bull of the Pope. Now, as in our opinion you must know more about this than any other man, we wish you to provide us with information on this point; for, should you be really of the same opinion as they, we might possibly find it convenient to ask for an alteration of the Bull in this regard. . . Do not forget to send us your sailing chart, and the map you promised to make, as well as the number and the names of the islands which you discovered."

It is to be regretted that Columbus's side of this correspondence with King Ferdinand is not preserved or at least has not yet come to light. At the same time that of the king alone appears to us sufficient. For his communications to Columbus furnish the *formal confession* on the part of the Portuguese ambassadors that four caravels had sailed from Madeira to the west in the track of Col-

umbus's discoveries. The whole manœuvre had been managed with great adroitness and secrecy, yet it did not escape the vigilance of Columbus's friends and the spies of Ferdinand. The king must also have been possessed of positive evidence as to the dispatch of the caravels and must have laid it under the eyes of the ambassadors. Hardly otherwise would they have confessed the fact ; and we must admire the sagacity with which the monarch penetrated the specious disguise of the envoys.

Regarding the dispatch of the caravels as a matter beyond doubt our chart affords evidence of a very strong character that they arrived also at *a point farther west than that reached by Columbus*, and returned, bringing with them a report and the picture of what they had found.



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